

## ***Measure Passes House***

*Betty McCollum entered the following statement into the Congressional Record supporting H. Res.194, a resolution that apologizes for the enslavement and racial segregation of African-Americans.*

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Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res.194 a resolution that apologizes for the enslavement and racial segregation of African-Americans.

It may be unimaginable today, but for more than 240 years, until 1865, in the 13 original colonies and the United States, there were men, women, and children forced to labor in bondage and bought and sold as property. It is a dark and shameful historic truth that this nation must acknowledge and seek to remedy. Those who were enslaved and those who owned slaves have all passed away long ago. Yet, the historic legacy and pain of slavery is a reality we continue to struggle with as a nation.

As slavery evolved into racial segregation, a new pain and hardship was inflicted upon African-Americans. While far less severe than slavery, it was no less degrading and demoralizing. This is also a painful historical legacy we have rejected as a nation. Still, this legacy took place in my lifetime and should be remembered, reflected upon, and aggressively attacked when it reemerges “officially” in our cities, neighborhoods and schools.

This resolution is courageous and correct. I commend Mr. Cohen, its author, because it is meaningful for the U.S. House of Representatives to make this public apology. As a former social studies teacher, I taught my students that we cannot change history, but we must learn from history and use its lessons to make the future better for all mankind. Respect, tolerance and the elimination of prejudice and racism are actions we can take as individuals and as a society today.

We have an opportunity today and everyday, as lawmakers here in Congress and as citizens across this country, to recommit ourselves to seek an end to racial inequality and injustice, and to seek greater unity among all Americans. To keep moving forward towards racial equality in America requires recognizing past injustice and to this end, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and yield back the balance of my time.

